Manual Addendum
The Comic Strip Factory version 1.5

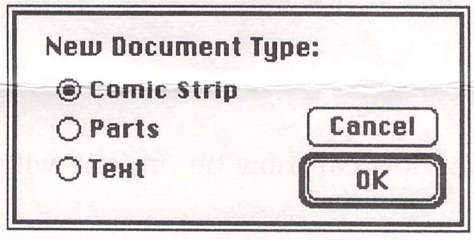
This document describes differences between The Comic Strip Factory version 1.5 and the version documented in your manual.

If you're already familiar with The Comic Strip Factory, this addendum will introduce you to new features. If you're just getting started with The Comic Strip Factory, read the sections **New...** and **Open...** below, then turn to the tutorial in your manual. Read about the other new features when you're more familiar with the program.

File Menu

New...

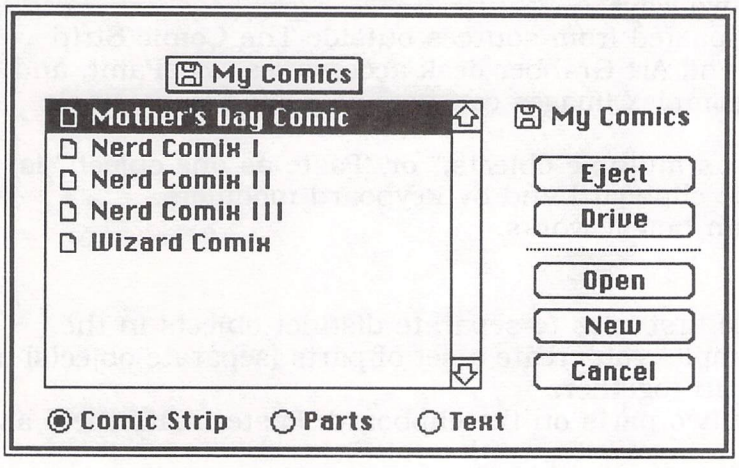
Three kinds of new document can be created by The Comic Strip Factory: Comic Strip, Parts, and Text. Selecting **New...** brings up this dialog:



Since only one of each document type can be open at once, radio buttons for documents already open are dimmed. To create a new document of any available type, click an active radio button (or accept the default of the first available type) and click **OK**. If the type selected is a Comic Strip, another dialog will come up, as described in the manual under **New Comic Strip...**.

Open...

Three kinds of document can be opened by The Comic Strip Factory: Comic Strip, Parts, and Text. Selecting **Open...** brings up this dialog:



This is a standard Open dialog with file type radio buttons and a **New** button added. Since The Comic Strip Factory only keeps one of each window type open at once, radio buttons for document types already open are dimmed.

The scrolling list displays file types selected by the radio buttons. To display a list of another file type, click the radio button of the desired type. To open one of the files, click on the file name and click **Open**.

To create a new file of the selected type, click **New**.

Other Open dialog controls operate as described in your Macintosh manual. The functions of some controls depend on whether you are using MFS or HFS filing system and the number of drives attached to your Macintosh.

Transfer...

Since The Comic Strip Factory is designed to use data from other programs, we included **Transfer...** in the File menu. This allows you to run another program without quitting to the Finder. Like **Quit**, **Transfer...** asks if you wish to save open files before exiting. This allows you to save changes, discard changes, or cancel the operation. If you don't cancel, the standard Open dialog is displayed after all files are closed. From this dialog you can select an application to run.

In conjunction with the **Transfer...** item in PartMaker II, you can move back and forth between The Comic Strip Factory and PartMaker II quickly.

Edit Menu

Undo

Most actions in the Comic window and Parts window can now be undone with the Undo command. Undoable actions include

- dragging,
- duplicating,
- deleting,
- Pasting, and
- all commands in the Object and Arrange menus.

Changes to panels, including changing the shape, background picture, or panel pattern, can't be undone.

In addition to command-Z, the ~ key (at the upper-left of your keyboard) is a shortcut for Undo.

Paste

Paste has been improved in two ways.

Multiple objects can now be pasted from sources outside The Comic Strip Factory, such as the Scrapbook and Art Grabber desk accessories, MacPaint, and other graphics programs. Also, complex images can now be pasted in as single rectangular objects.

Which type of Paste— "Paste as multiple objects," or "Paste as one object," is determined by the picture on the clipboard and by keyboard modifiers.

Follow along, and we'll explain how it works.

Smart Paste

Without a modifier key, Paste first tries to separate distinct objects in the picture. This is useful if, for example, you create a set of parts (separate objects) in a paint program, then paste them in together.

If there are fewer than thirty-two parts on the clipboard, Paste treats them as separate objects.

After separating the picture into objects, Paste checks to see if any of the objects are close to other objects. ("Close" means separated by only one white dot.)

If the objects *are* close together, you probably intended them as one object, not many separate objects. And that's what Paste assumes. The neighboring objects are then merged together before Pasting.

That's one way Smart Paste works.

Here's the other way: If a picture on the clipboard contains more than thirty-two distinct objects, the picture is Pasted as a single object with a rectangular background mask. This is a handy way to use part of a MacPaint picture as a panel background.

(Note: Smart Paste applies only to pictures pasted from outside The Comic Strip Factory, not overlapping parts copied from within the program. Objects Cut or Copied within The Comic Strip Factory will Paste as they originally appeared, unless modified by a special Paste command, as described below.)

Option-Paste

Option-Paste gives you more control over Paste.

If you hold down the Option key while pasting, the clipboard is Pasted as a single part with a rectangular mask. Option-Paste converts the clipboard contents to a single rectangular object before Pasting. This applies to pictures cut from within The Comic Strip Factory or from another source.

Subsequent Paste commands also paste this one object, unless modified by the shift key as described below.

Note on using objects as background...

As we mentioned above, a single object with a rectangular mask is useful as an alternate panel background.

Such an object isn't as a standard background, though. It should be "sent to the back," or it will cover other objects in the panel. Also, be careful not to send other objects behind it. The "background object" can still be selected and moved as an object, so you won't be able to start a selection rectangle in that panel.

Even sent to the back, the background object is in front of the "real" background pattern, so the **Background Pattern...** menu item can't be used to lighten or darken it.

You can, however, do this: Make a silhouette of the object, bring the silhouette in front of the object, select a pattern and whether to darken or lighten from the **Set Pattern...** dialog.

This is one workaround to the limitation of one background picture per file. Another workaround is to use a paint program to create a composite background file from the desired parts of two or more existing background files.

Shift-Paste

Shift-Paste is the opposite of Option-Paste. It tells the program to try harder to Paste the clipboard as separate objects with fitted background masks.

If the clipboard contains objects copied from The Comic Strip Factory, Shift-Paste first makes the objects into a single picture, then attempts to separate them.

Shift-Paste is somewhat different from the standard Paste command. Shift-Paste tries to merge objects with neighboring objects *as each object is created* instead of waiting until all objects are found. This means the thirty-two object limit is reached much later than with the standard paste command.

Shift-Paste is useful when you want Paste to "try harder" to make separate objects.

Here's an example.

You use standard Paste with a picture from a Paint program. You want to Paste separate objects, but standard Paste interprets the clipboard as a single rectangular object.

To force the issue—to make Paste try harder to separate objects—try again with Shift-Paste.

If the clipboard still pastes as a single object, try pasting fewer items at a time.

Shift-Paste is also useful for splitting one object into two objects. Using **Edit Object...**, erase enough of the object's black bits to simulate two separate objects. (Black bits of the intended separate objects must be separated by at least two dots.) It's not necessary to erase the white bits. Click OK. Copy the object to the clipboard then Shift-Paste. The clipboard will paste in as two objects.

Like Option-Paste, Shift-Paste changes the contents of the clipboard to the set of objects just pasted.

If both the Option key and the Shift key are held down while pasting, the Shift key will be ignored and an Option-Paste will be performed.

Pasting Recap

Here again, in abbreviated form, are the various ways to paste:

Paste, if fewer than 32 objects, tries to paste as separate objects. Neighboring objects are merged. If more than 32 objects, pastes as a single rectangular object.

Option-Paste pastes as a single rectangular object.

Shift-Paste tries harder to paste as separate objects.

Dragging

Autoscrolling

This one's a convenience for comic construction. If the mouse pointer passes the window edge while dragging objects, the window automatically scrolls. Autoscrolling can be used in the Comic and Parts windows. You can also autoscroll while dragging the outline of a panel in the Background window.

Destination Panel Display

While dragging objects in the Comic window, if the mouse enters a panel that isn't selected, the panel is automatically selected. When the mouse button is released, the program tries to place all restricted parts that were being moved into the newly selected panel.

Any parts that don't overlap the selected panel are freed from the panel.

And finally...

We hope you enjoy the new features of version 1.5. Many of them are the result of your comments and suggestions.

If you have any comments about The Comic Strip Factory, or suggestions for futher improvements, we'd like to hear from you.

PartMaker II Instructions

PartMaker II replaces the PartMaker program described in your manual. PartMaker II, like the former PartMaker,

- reads MacPaint files,
- converts MacPaint graphics into parts, and
- saves the parts for use in The Comic Strip Factory.

PartMaker II has been completely rewritten. It is about four times faster than the earlier version. PartMaker II also displays the conversion process.

Because of these improvements, most of Rolling Your Own Parts on pages 22 and 23 of your manual is obsolete. This sheet replaces that manual section.

Rolling Your Own Parts version 2.0

PartMaker II "sees" a paint file as objects separated by white space. The objects are converted to parts and copied to a parts file, which you can then name and save.

Before we discuss how it's done, let's define "paint file" and "white space."

A paint file is any file MacPaint can open. But the file needn't be created by MacPaint. FullPaint, SuperPaint, MacBillboard, ComicWorks, The Comic Strip Factory, and most graphic digitizers can save MacPaint files. Some of these products save paint files as an option. Others, like MacBillboard and FullPaint, use paint files exclusively.

Most clip art comes in paint files. Clip art is ideal for parts files because clip art objects are surrounded by generous white space.

The white space is important. To PartMaker II, white space is "space separating distinct objects." That definition is used by PartMaker II to find graphic objects and to create parts.

Here's how PartMaker II works:

A paint file is scanned until a black dot is found. The object's edge is then traced. The edge is where white dots meet black dots. To PartMaker II, everything within the edge is an object.

So far, PartMaker II is like an automatic MacPaint "lasso."

Many comic parts, however, *aren't* tightly enclosed. Fred Nerd and Root Wiz, for example, have wispy hair– potentially many, many separate objects!

To include those stray bits, PartMaker II looks at neighboring parts. If a neighboring part is *only one white dot* away, the two parts are merged together.

When designing your own parts, remember that "white space" means "separated by *more than one* white dot."

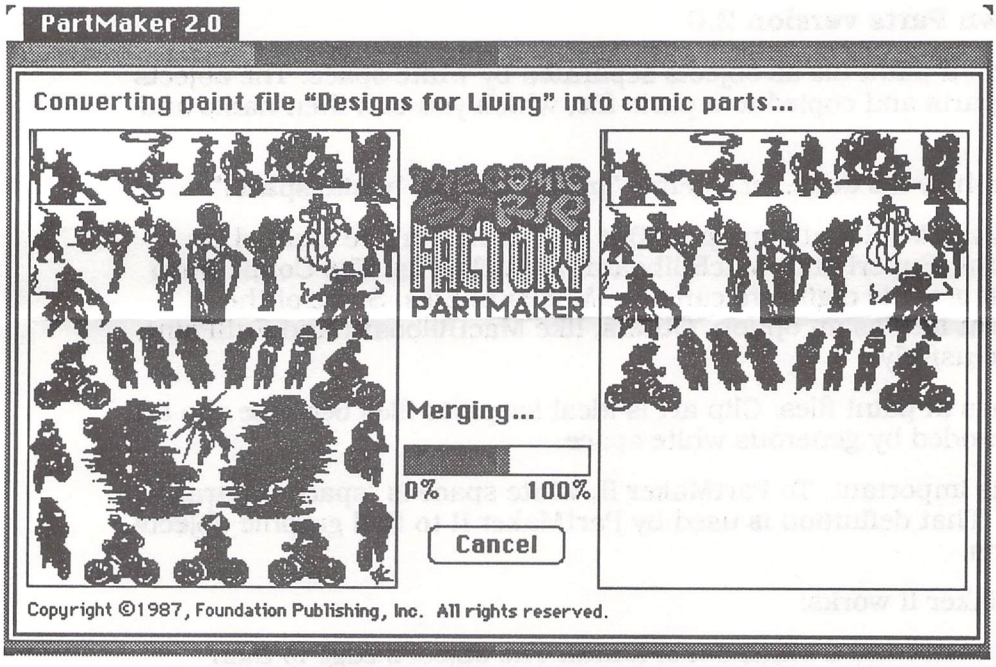
You may find, though, that wisps are wispier than PartMaker II takes into account. Remember, if stray dots are separated by more than one white dot,

PartMaker II makes them separate objects. To merge these "strays" manually, load the new parts file into The Comic Strip Factory. Then drag a selection rectangle around objects that may be several parts. If two or more animated marquees appear, select **MergeBits** from the **Objects** menu. The MergeBits command "merges" the separate parts into one object.

You may also find objects that aren't completely enclosed. White sections of these parts may become transparent. To find the transparent areas, choose a gray background pattern in the Parts window. To fix partially transparent parts, use **EditBits**.

Using PartMaker II

This is the easy part. Open PartMaker II from the Finder. Choose **Convert Paint...** from the **PartMaker 2.0** menu. Open a paint file. PartMaker II brings up a this dialog:



"Designs for Living" is part of Mac the Ripper, copyright ©1986 by Miles Computing, Inc. Used by permission.

The paint file is at the left. As parts are found, they're copied to the right rectangle. The thermometer shows the conversion's progress.

The word above the thermometer shows the conversion stage in progress: "Tracing..." when the object's edge is being traced, "Copying..." when the object is made into a part, and "Merging..." when other parts are checked for possible merging.

You can press **Cancel** at any time to stop the process and save parts already converted.

When the entire paint file has been converted, or when you cancel, a Save dialog allows you to save the new parts file to disk.

We hope you enjoy PartMaker II!